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Policies:

- AG-6. Require agricultural land divisions to meet the following minimum parcel sizes:

<u>General Plan Land Use Category</u>	<u>Minimum Parcel Size</u>
Agricultural Cropland	
SCS Soil Classes I and II	40 acres
SCS Soil Classes III and IV	80 acres
General Agriculture 20	20 acres
General Agriculture 80	80 acres
Agriculture Urban Reserve	10 acres

- AG-7. Agricultural zoning district boundaries shall be rational and shall respect parcel boundaries.
- AG-8. Agricultural land divisions shall not adversely affect the integrity of agricultural pursuits. Agricultural land divisions may be denied if the reviewing authority finds that the division of land is likely to create circumstances inconsistent with this policy.

Implementation Measure:

- A. Evaluate minimum parcel sizes necessary for sustained agricultural productivity on SCS soil classes I through IV, and amend Policy AG-6 according to the results of that analysis. (PLANNING)

ENCROACHMENT BY NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVES

Objective: Prime farmlands and farmlands with intensive agricultural investments protected from encroachment by natural resource preserves without compromising biologic diversity and habitat values.

Intent: In addition to encroachments by urban developments, county farmlands are potentially threatened by conversion to wildlife refuges, regulations curtailing agricultural practices to protect adjacent natural resource preserves, and adverse public use impacts associated with outdoor recreational facilities and trails. For example, the proposed Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge could possibly convert areas of prime farmlands and farms with intensive agricultural investments to wildlife habitat and lead to additional spraying controls on remaining nearby farmland.

Balancing farmland protection in concert with habitat preservation so as to maintain the County's multiple natural resource values is the keystone for much of the policy proposed in the Draft General Plan. Disruption of one resource value for another is an historic pattern of land development in the County. In attempt to restore a fraction of the County's multiple resource base some changes in land use may occur. For instance, the Draft Open Space Element

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proposes acquiring fee title to several rural areas featuring unusual natural resource values such as vernal pools or riparian forests. Some of these areas are being used for livestock grazing or crop production, activities that could be displaced or disrupted if these parcels are acquired for natural resource preserves.

Policies:

- AG-9. The County shall balance the protection of prime farmlands and farmlands with intensive agricultural investments with the preservation of natural habitat realized by the establishment of environmental mitigation banks and sites, wildlife refuges and other natural resource preserves so as to protect farmland and to conserve associated habitat values.
- AG-10. Mitigation banks, environmental mitigation sites, wildlife refuges, and other natural resource preserves adjacent to prime farmland or land with intensive agricultural investments shall not disrupt or disturb standard farming practices.
- AG-11. The County would adopt policies and design contracts to promote the placing of natural amenities on land, such as trees and other biota enhancing improvement, by making sure amenities are assets both in nature and under law.
- AG-12. Indemnification against property losses from recreational users shall be provided to agricultural property owners adjacent to mitigation banks, environmental mitigation sites, wildlife refuges, or other natural resource preserves provided loss is proven to be a direct and exclusive result of new recreational access provided by the establishment of, and occurring through, such sites, and provide law enforcement access to such sites.
- AG-13. Initiate intergovernmental agreements with State and Federal Wildlife management authorities in order to mitigate loss of prime farmland or land with intensive agricultural investment due to natural habitat conversion.
- AG-14. The County shall pursue opportunities to create mitigation banks, environmental mitigation sites, wildlife refuges, or other natural resource preserves wherein substantial agricultural activities that are compatible with protection of high habitat values continue, but incompatible activities and conversion for development are precluded by conservation easements.
- AG-15. Instigate coordination with nonprofit organizations to acquire conservation easements for preserving farmlands.

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